

# COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

VOL. XII. No. 10.] LONDON, SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 5, 1807. [PRICE 10D.

" Sir, the last House of Commons, being sensible how narrowly this Nation escaped being ruined by a sort of *Monsters* called *Pensioners*, which sat in the late Long Parliament, had entered into a Consideration how to prevent the like from coming into future Parliaments; and, in order thereto, resolved, That they would severely chastize some of those that had been guilty, and make the best Laws they could to prevent the like for the future: and for that purpose a Committee was appointed, of which Mr. Serjeant Gregory, now Judge Gregory, was Chairman; by which, many Papers relating to that Affair, came to his Hands. Sir, I think it a business of so great Importance, that it ought never to be forgotten, nor the Prosecution of it deferred. I have often heard, that England can never be destroyed but by it self: to have such Parliaments, was the most likely way that ever yet was invented. I remember a great Lawyer said in this House, when it was debated in the last Parliament, " That it was Treason;" and he gave many learned Arguments to make it out. Whether it be so or no, I will not now offer to debate; but I think, that, when those that are the Legislators of the Nation are guilty of taking Bribes, to undermine the Laws and Government of this Nation, they ought to be chastized as Traitors. It was my Fortune to sit here a little while in the Long Parliament; I did observe that all those that had *Pensions*, and most of those that had *offices*, voted all of a side, as they were directed by some great Officer, as exactly as if their Business in this House had been to *preserve their Pensions and Offices*, and not to make Laws for the good of them that sent them here. How such Persons could any way be useful for the support of the Government, by preserving a fair Understanding between the King and his People, or, on the contrary, how dangerous they must have been, as instruments to bring in Arbitrary Power, I leave to every Man's Judgment. They were so far from being the true Representatives of the People, that they were a distinct middle interest, between the King and the People; and their chief business was to serve the end of some great Minister of State, though ever so opposite to the true Interest of the Nation. Sir, this business ought never to fail, though there should be ever so many Prorogations and Dissolutions of Parliaments, before any thing be done in it; I think it is the Interest of the Nation, that it should be prosecuted from Parliament to Parliament, as if there were an Impeachment in against them. And, therefore, Sir, I would humbly move you to send some Members of this House to Judge Gregory, for the Papers he hath taken in his Custody relating to this Affair, that so you may, in convenient time, proceed further herein, as you shall think good. And, Sir, being there is a Report, that some of this House have now made a Bargain at Court for great Offices, in order to vitiate and corrupt their Votes in this House; which may perhaps, be a false report and invented with a design to cast a Reflection on such Members; yet, in order to satisfy the World, and vindicate this House from the suspicion of their approving of such a practice, I pray, Sir, let there be a Vote past, That no Member of this House shall accept of any Office under the Crown, during such time as he continues a Member of this House."—Speech of Sir Francis Winnington, in the House of Commons, December 30, 1680.

After a debate the House came to the following Resolutions.—1. " That the several Writings, Papers, and Proceedings, relating to such Members of the late Long Parliament, who received Allowances out of the Money appointed for Secret Services, be produced to this House." 2. *Nem. con.*, " That no Member of this House shall accept of any Office or Place of Profit, from the Crown, without the leave of this House; nor any Promise of any such Office, or Place of Profit, during such time as he shall continue a Member of this House: and that all Offenders herein shall be expelled."—Journals of the House of Commons, Vol. IX. p. 645.

353]

## SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT (continued from page 338).—The mode of issuing *Election Writs* became a subject of discussion, towards the close of the session. The occasion was this: Mr. Jeffery, member for Poole, complained, that the writ, for holding the election for that place, had been unlawfully kept back from the returning officer, in order to serve the private ends of one or more of the candidates.—The cause of detention, or rather the early possession of the writ, was traced to an attorney's clerk, who was brought to the bar of the Honourable House. The Honourable House ordered him to tell who it was that he gave the writ to; but he, alledging, that to make such discovery, would be a breach of honour,

refused to tell the Honourable House who it was that he gave it to; whereupon the Honourable House committed him to jail.—Mr. Barham, one of the members, espoused the cause of the attorney's clerk; and said, that, while all the members well knew what was the practice in this case; while no one of them scrupled to talk familiarly upon the subject out of doors, it was a shame to talk, in doors, as if no such practices existed.—The practice was described to be this: that the messenger of the great seal, instead of sending the several writs by express, to do which to each place he is allowed so much a mile, gave the writs to particular persons who applied for them; that these persons, who wanted to have it in their power to hasten, or retard, the day of election, became

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[354



his messengers; but, in fact, that they paid him pretty handsomely for his granting them the favour. — Any thing more foul; any thing better calculated to defeat the professed purposes of the writs; any abuse more daring and scandalous cannot well be conceived. What, however, was done, upon the discovery, upon the open avowal, upon the undisputed and indisputable allegation of it? Was the offender punished? No. Was he reprimanded? No. Was he desired to do so no more? No. Was he even *blamed*? No. Not even blame; but, the old panacea, *an act of parliament*, was proposed, in order to prevent the delay of the arrival of writs, in future. A bill was brought in by Mr. Barham, with a view to its being passed early next session, containing a long string of regulations for *the transmitting of writs by the post*. That these regulations will be less likely to be observed than the former regulations is, I think, certain; because, passing through so many hands, the writ may, at some place or other, be detained, for several days, without the possibility of *proving* any particular person to have committed the crime of wilful detention. But, the circumstance most worthy of notice, and, indeed, the only one worthy of much notice, as tending to expose the real state of things, is, that Mr. Barham, proposed to make provision, that the present messenger of the great seal, as he would suffer a diminution of his emoluments by putting a stop to the sale of writs, should, for his life, receive, in lieu thereof, *a compensation out of the public purse*! I dare say now, that Mr. Barham is a great man for *the constitution*, which, indeed, he talked a good deal about at the time of proposing this measure. Oh, the invaluable constitution! It is an invaluable thing to some people, as Sir Francis Burdett observed upon the occasion of the advertisement of Lady Salisbury. That abuses, by whomsoever committed, if they are but committed *against the public*, are pretty sure to pass with *impunity*, when discovered, we have sufficient experience of. Upon this point both factions seem to be perfectly agreed, seem to be animated with one and the same soul; but, that an abuse, when discovered and exposed, should have its gains, when taken away by putting a stop to the thing, *compensated for*, and that, too, by an act of parliament, is, I must confess, something new, even in England. — When a man has been detected “in frauds upon the revenue,” and it is found, that he has long been a great gainer by such frauds, what is the consequence? He is most severely punished; he is sweated to his last

penny; he is made to refund all his gains as far as they can possibly be ascertained, and is heavily fined into the bargain. What a contrast! And yet, what difference is there in the two cases, except that, in this latter, the man only retains that which, were it not for a taxing law, would be his own?

— This bill of Mr. Barham's is, comparatively speaking, a matter of small importance in itself; but, when viewed as a specimen of the manner in which abuses are considered by those who have, at present, the power to redress them, it is of great importance; it throws a clear light upon their inclination as to such matters; it can leave no doubt in our minds as to their motives; it is conclusive as to what we have to expect from them. — III. *The Irish Insurrection Bill* met with very little opposition in the Lords' House of Parliament; and, in the other House one hardly knows which to admire most, Mr. Grattan's conduct, in becoming the chief supporter of the bill, or Mr. Sheridan's in making no opposition to it, until it was too late, until he knew, until he *must have known*, that it was too late for his opposition to produce any effect. Indeed, he did not *oppose* the bill; he only talked about it, loudly talked about it; but, at the same time took care to say, that he could not oppose it; and, *when it was passed*, called for *an inquiry* into the necessity of passing it! This was just one of his old tricks to obtain *popularity*; to catch the applause of the unwary and the ignorant; and to support, with the help of play-ticket-bribed editors of newspapers, a reputation for the possession of that which he never possessed; namely, a regard for the liberties and happiness of the people, that people, in the odium of *extracting sacrifices* from whom, he, in the hour of his Westminster triumph, all covered with play-house laurels and street-dirt as he was, boasted that he was ready to take his full share, to which he might safely have added, that he was ready also to take his full share of the amount of such sacrifices. — Of exactly the same description was his motion relative to the *publicans' licences*. He promised the people, in Covent Garden, that he would bring in a bill to prevent the *Police-Magistrates* from having it in their power to ruin the publicans that had voted, or might vote, for Sir Francis Burdett; and, what did he do? He did nothing till the close of the session, and then he proposed a bill to extend to the power of *all justices of the peace*, in all parts of the kingdom; a bill that *he knew* would never pass; and, indeed, a bill that *ought not* to pass. But, as he imagined, he did what would an-

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swer his purpose, if not the purpose of the publicans. They will, and he well knew they would, receive neither redress for the past nor protection for the future; but, he also well knew, that he had done enough to furnish him with the subject of a speech at the next election. In his anticipated effects of this he will, however, be disappointed. If, by the act of God or of man, he should again have an opportunity of making an appeal to the Electors of Westminster, they will know how to meet his appeal; they will know how to answer him, how to send him back to his rotten borough.—With respect to this Gentleman, it never should be forgotten, that, the moment the change of ministry took place, in 1806, he not only obtained a place of £4,000 a year for himself and a sinecure place for his son, worth £3,000 a year; but *asked* for a sinecure place for himself, *for life*, worth £4,000 a year more, in addition to his Cornwall sinecure (also paid out of the pockets of the people) of about £1,500 a year. And this is the *patriot*! This is the man, who, by means of a motion or two, which he evidently intends shall produce no effect, hopes to gain popularity, and that, too, amongst the electors of Westminster! His unmeaning motion about the publicans of Westminster will do them great injury. It will add to the disposition to oppress them; and, they will, even before now, perhaps, have smarted for his selfish attempt. The matter was put off to the next session. The chances are that he will never revive it; and, if he does, it will be in a way that he thinks best calculated to answer his own ends and those ends only.—To return again to the Irish Insurrection Bill, I should be glad to know *how long* it is since Mr. Grattan discovered, that there was a *French Party* existing in Ireland. This is of great importance; because it is not a very long time since he asserted it to be an infamous slander to accuse his countrymen of disloyalty. How it must have gladdened the heart of that departed saint, Pitt, to have heard this confession, this precious confession, from Mr. Grattan! And, what glory is it to his zealous disciples, that they have been able to effect a conversion, which their great master, with all his moving means, so long laboured at in vain! My lord Castlereagh has long been famed for his powers of converting political sinners; but, he failed with Mr. Grattan. His time was not come; or, the arguments applied were not sufficiently weighty. It remained for this blessed season, and for the irresistible arguments of his Grace the Duke of Portland, to effect so great a work. Now

that it is done, however, it seems to be done completely.—The thing most worthy of observation, is, that, not only was Mr. Grattan a *defender* of this bill, but was the *cause* of it; for, it was expressly declared, that the bill was passed, or, at least brought forward, upon the strength of his assertion, that there was, and is, a *French party in Ireland*, of which French party he has never, I believe, been known to speak before, much less to express any degree of apprehension at its designs.—If, however, there be a French party in Ireland, it is high time to think of some means of putting it down; and, as there is no force, however great, that can restrain the movements of the *mind*, something other than force should be applied. Since I have *known* any thing of Ireland, I have always been of opinion, an opinion that I have constantly expressed, that a mere passing of an act to admit a few Roman Catholics into place would have no effect in curing the great disease of that country; but, if I had not been of this opinion before, I should after reading the letter of my correspondent in my last Number, page 338, where the writer has most ably described the internal situation of Ireland. But, I do not agree with him as to the *remedy* which he proposes. He seems to think, that we are better off than the Irish, only because we have more people employed in manufacturing goods; whereas my opinion is, that the manufactories are one source of our pauperism. We all know, that the manufactures have greatly increased in quantity, since the beginning of Pitt's reign, and we also know, that the paupers have increased; so that, here is nothing to encourage us to increase the manufactories of Ireland with a view of diminishing the misery of the country. If my correspondent would wish to *subdue the spirit of the people*, I know of few better ways than that of shutting thousands of them up in a large house and making them work for one man, who rings them to their labour and their meals by a bell. A hundred of these houses in Ireland would certainly render the people, not contented, but perfectly impotent; and, if the mere preservation of the dominion of the country be all that is wanted, the scheme, *if practicable*, might be a good one. For my part, however, I should rather recommend an abolition, first of the useless offices and emoluments; next a large deduction from the interest paid upon what is called the national debt; and next a change with respect to tithes. These would reduce the burdens of taxation, and that would, assuredly, diminish the poverty and



misery of the people; and, as to their being contented, that will depend, and *ought* to depend, entirely upon the treatment they receive.

TO THE  
INDEPENDENT ELECTORS  
OF THE  
CITY AND LIBERTIES OF WESTMINSTER.  
LETTER XXV.

GENTLEMEN,

I had lately (see this Vol. pages 236 and 257) occasion to address you upon the subject of the present dispute between our country and the American States; and, as you will recollect, the address proceeded in the manner of a commentary upon an article, which had just before appeared in a weekly newspaper, called the Independent Whig. The writer of that paper had expressed in a tone very vehement, his disapprobation of what I had, in my paper of the preceding week, said respecting the dispute in question. I had asserted, that our admiral and his captains had done well in the case referred to, and had expressed my *fears*, that our ministers were disposed to *yield*, that they were disposed to give up our right to search ships of foreign nations for deserters from our own ships. This assertion the writer of the newspaper above-mentioned had severely attacked; and, as it was a point of great national importance, I thought it right to endeavour to maintain my assertion, by all the authority and all the arguments, which, at that time, suggested themselves to my mind. This I did in the two letters, addressed to you, which I have above referred to; and, as the writer of the Independent Whig had, subsequent to the publication of my first letter upon the subject, announced that he was *perfectly prepared* to answer me, and had been pressed, by many correspondents, to do it without delay, I naturally expected, that, after having taken a week to examine both my letters, he would, in his paper of last Sunday, have published what he regarded as an answer. What was my surprise, then, when, instead of an elaborate defence of the Americans and of their denial of our right of search, I found a very long and uncommonly desultory article upon the sins of Mr. Windham, Lord Grenville, Pitt, Lord Hawkesbury, Lord Melville, Steele, Trotter, Mr. Fox, Mr. Sheridan, and Mr. Cobbett. A great deal, in this article, is true, and a great deal of it, though, perhaps, true in the facts, perfectly false (unintentionally, without doubt) in the inferences. Upon

the whole, however, there is so much boldness, so many home truths told in this article, that I am glad it was published; and shall, at any time, be ready to thank the writer for making a criticism upon my conduct and character the vehicle of similar truths. But, it must be confessed, I think, by this writer himself, that neither my sins nor my weaknesses nor my virtues (if he will allow me to have any of the latter), have any thing to do with the question of England's maritime dominion; and, I must say, that it gives me satisfaction to perceive, that a person whose talents I greatly respect, and who has very recently expressed great admiration of me, upon comparing my character with my arguments in defence of my country's rights, found the former the most vulnerable of the two. For, as to any answer, which he has *in reserve*, it is quite incredible that he should have allowed another week to pass without giving it to the public, seeing that the time will be, and, indeed, already is, gone by, for such answer to produce any useful effect. Of this he must have been fully aware, and, therefore, I cannot regard his concluding notification, respecting an answer in reserve, in any light but that of a tacit acknowledgement, that he was, for once, in the wrong, which acknowledgement he, doubtless, regards as tantamount to having inserted (as I usually do in such cases) the arguments made use of against him. At any rate, I am convinced, in my own mind, that he will find great difficulty in executing his promised *refutation*; but, if he should advance any thing which I think of weight in the question, and not too thickly covered with matter quite extraneous, I shall not fail to bestow upon it attention proportioned in degree to the importance of the subject.

In the meanwhile, Gentlemen, our time will not be badly employed in bestowing some further consideration upon the subject itself, first noticing what we find, in the public prints, relative to the conduct of the Americans.—The article, which I am about to insert for your perusal is, it appears, taken from a paper published at Norfolk, in Virginia, on the 13th of July last. This article is entitled: "*Some Retaliation.*" It is in these words: "Last evening an express arrived at head-quarters to the commander, General Matthews, from Capt. Shepherd, of the troop of cavalry stationed near the Cape. The intelligence the express brought is of *great importance*: it announces the *first act of retaliation* for the outrages of the British squadron. The substance of the intelligence, as far as we

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“are informed, and our information may be  
 “relied on, is, that a boat with five men,  
 “viz. *two midshipmen and three sailors*,  
 “was seen to land on Thursday evening,  
 “on the east side of the inlet; the people  
 “came on shore, and *were fired at by a de-*  
 “*tachment of militia* under the command  
 “of a lieutenant from Kempsville. They  
 “retreated and took refuge in the woods.  
 “Information having been given to Captain  
 “Shepherd of the place to which they had  
 “retired, it was *immediately surrounded*.  
 “In the morning they were discovered,  
 “and surrendered themselves prisoners  
 “without resistance. The boat and arms  
 “on board of her have been *taken possession*  
 “of; and the men are now *prisoners* at Mr.  
 “Lemuel Cornick’s waiting the orders of  
 “the general.”—This account, which  
 bears so exact a resemblance to Gay’s journal  
 of the wars against the geese, ducks, and  
 chicken in a farm-yard, you will hardly be-  
 lieve to be serious; but, I, who know the  
 heroes well, also know, that they will boast  
 of this exploit through columns upon col-  
 umns of their base and stupid newspapers;  
 nor should I be at all surprized, if we were  
 to find, that the several town-meetings in  
 Virginia had sent addresses of thanks to the  
 Lieutenant, who caused a detachment of  
 militia to fire at two little boys and three  
 men.

“Father and mother and I  
 “And two or three lusty men  
 “Beat a poor little boy  
 “Till he cou’d n’t go or stand.”

This bit of an old burlesque ballad, though  
 it has neither rhyme nor measure, is most  
 eloquently descriptive of the heroism of the  
 American militia, upon all other occasions  
 that I have heard of, as well as upon this.  
 Gentlemen, let me ask you, whether you  
 would have thought this an act worthy of  
 being boasted of as an act of national reta-  
 liation? If, under similar circumstances, an  
 American boat, so manned, had come into  
 any of our rivers, would either of you, hav-  
 ing the command of a detachment of sol-  
 diers, have ordered these soldiers to fire at  
 two boys and three men? Would you have  
 boasted of being able to make them “re-  
 treat?” Would you have thought it neces-  
 sary to “surround” them? And, would you  
 have cried victory! victory! when they sur-  
 rendered “without resistance?” No: there  
 is not a single Briton or Irishman, in what-  
 ever state of life he may be found, in whose  
 mind sentiments so base could possibly exist.  
 This achievement together with the account  
 of it is well worthy of the Americans; per-  
 fectly characteristic of their minds and their

manners; and, I have not the least doubt,  
 but they will console themselves, with the  
 reflection, that this *defeat and capture* of our  
 boat’s crew of two boys and three men *rubs*  
*off their disgrace* in the affair of the Chesa-  
 peak and the Leopard.

The following paragraphs, from the same  
 American paper, are also worthy of atten-  
 tion.—“We are authorised to state, that  
 “in consequence of information received  
 “that the British squadron had departed  
 “from Hampton Roads, and had taken a  
 “station off our Capes, the Executive *have*  
 “suspended the march to Hampton of the  
 “500 militia ordered out from Gen.  
 “White’s brigade. They have been per-  
 “mitted to return to their respective homes,  
 “with orders to *hold themselves in readiness*  
 “to take the field at a moment’s warning.  
 “—We understand, that on application  
 “being made to the Secretary of the Trea-  
 “sury, on the subject of the President’s  
 “proclamation, he has advised, that its pro-  
 “hibitions are *not meant to include British*  
 “*merchant vessels, although armed and*  
 “*bearing letters of marque*.—It has been  
 “stated in several papers that Mr. Erskine  
 “was at Washington when a discussion re-  
 “lative to the seamen took place between  
 “Mr. Maddison and that Minister, *who had*  
 “*consented to wave all claim to them*.—  
 “Mr. Erskine, we are well informed, de-  
 “nies that his opinion was ever asked, or  
 “that he ever gave any upon the subject,  
 “and we moreover understand that *he has*  
 “*expressed a wish that the report should*  
 “*be contradicted*.—We notice this mere-  
 “ly with a view to present a correct state-  
 “ment of facts, for we never look to but  
 “one point in this case, and which is, *that*  
 “*under no circumstance whatever, should a*  
 “*national ship be visited, or her crew mus-*  
 “*tered, but by her own officers. The ship,*  
 “*like our territory, must be sacred, or we*  
 “*are not independent*.—The real cause  
 of suspending the march of the 500 militia,  
 I should suspect to be, that the said 500 mi-  
 litia were not, and could not be collected,  
 and, if collected, not kept together for five  
 days, much less be made to march to  
 Hampton, or to any other place, ten miles  
 from home. Every man, capable of bearing  
 arms, is a militia man in the American states.  
 I belonged to that respectable body for se-  
 veral years; but never did I join it for one  
 moment in my life; and, what is more, I  
 never personally happened to know any  
 man that did. I never saw that militia out  
 at parade, or drill, nor any portion of it;  
 and, though I was told, that some few men,  
 unable to pay a half-crown fine, sometimes



did attend, with sticks and staves for arms, I cannot say, that I believed the fact. When a paltry insurrection took place in Pennsylvania, the men, called out, positively refused to march; and, at last, men of property, and those principally from other States, consented to march only upon condition that Washington would go with them himself. The men, who had the honour to attack and defeat our two boys and three sailors, were, depend upon it, a numerous rabble, armed with their fowling pieces, quite sufficiently to be dreaded (for they are excellently expert at a dead mark), but still to be dreaded less than those thumbs and teeth of theirs, with which, in the Southern States, they gouge out men's eyes and bite their flesh.

The mildest possible construction is, it seems, put upon the President's Proclamation. He will touch *merchant* vessels in no shape, whether equipped for war, or not. The object is, perhaps, to inveigle our merchants to his side, who, in truth, as we have seen, do not want much inveigling. His proclamation is a mere *huff*. It is wind. It is an empty shew to please the numerous enemies of England; and so it will clearly appear to be, before four months have passed over our heads. They *cannot go to war with us*, without bringing certain ruin upon their own heads.

That Mr. Erskine, whose appointment to the station of English minister in America, I remarked upon at the time (see Register, Vol. X. 20 Dec. 1806) may, for aught I know to the contrary, have "consented to waive *his* claim" to the sailors who had deserted; but, it does not follow, that Admiral Berkeley, had consented to waive *his* claim, or rather, the claim of his country. I know very well how Mr. Erskine would feel upon such an occasion; indeed I knew beforehand how he would feel; and, I am not at all surprised, that he should have expressed a wish, that the report of *his having given an opinion upon the subject* should be contradicted. I am not at all surprised at this; for, I have before seen English consuls and ministers in America. But, Mr. Erskine's *opinion* was not wanted by Admiral Berkeley, who had quite sufficient authority for what he did.

The Americans tell us, that they look to but one point, and that is "that, under no circumstance whatever, should a *national* ship be visited, or her crew mustered, but by her own officers; the ship being, like *their territory*, sacred, or they are not independent." It is a curious and somewhat droll idea, that a nation cannot be independent, unless it has an indisputable right

to send its ships whithersoever it pleases upon the seas. But, leaving the Americans to reconcile themselves to it as they may, we shall, I trust, insist upon the rights, which ancient usage, and our undisputed power, give us of searching all ships whatever for British seamen, when we have reason to suspect that they are to be found on board; and, if the ministers should be so base as to recall Admiral Berkeley for ordering the Chesapeake to be searched, he will easily be able to prove, not only that England has always claimed this right of search, but that all her naval commanders, from the admiral of the fleet down to the captain of the smallest ship, is, even to this day, not only permitted to enforce this right, but absolutely ordered to enforce it, in cases where the enforcement may be required, and where he has the means of enforcement. The only error committed by Admiral Berkeley, was, his ordering the Captain of the Leopard to permit the American to search the Leopard, if he chose. That he had no authority to do; but, to search the American he had full and complete authority, and, if attempted to be punished, he has it in his power to cover the ministers with shame.

What nonsense, then, Gentlemen, was it that the Morning Chronicle preached upon this subject. What a scandalous thing was it, to set up a cry against our naval commanders for having done, not what was proper merely, but what they were *commanded* to do. But, as I had before the honour to observe to you, the faction of which that paper has always been the slave, seem to have a feeling, in all cases, against their country, and especially when the American States is a party in the dispute. Against speculators, against plunderers of every description, it is not very bitter. Like the Edinburgh Reviewers (as a correspondent has pointed out in another page of this sheet) it can find an apology for corruption, for flagrant corruption, even for the buying and selling of seats in parliament. It can, like them, coolly calculate the *cost* of corruptions, and drily tell us, that, if we could put a stop to all of them, in which the Reviewers evidently and almost avowedly hope to share, we should not save above a *million of money annually*, pretending not to perceive, that the mere amount of the *bribe* is a trifle compared to the *effects* of that bribe. In these matters, and in all cases wherein the *general* interests of the factions are concerned, the Morning Chronicle, like the Edinburgh Reviewers, can be very lenient. The reason, is, that neither has any feeling at all, either for the people, or for the honour of the country;



they are zealous only where the *particular interests* of their faction and themselves are at stake. But, what I like in them the least of all, is, that there never, even by accident, drops from their pen any sentiment whence we can reasonably conclude that they love this country better than another for any reason besides that of its being likely that they shall be able *to make more of it*. There is a coldness in their principles and opinions that I hate. Adam Smith seems to be their sole guide. The gain, the mere pecuniary, and even present, gain of the thing is all they appear to look at.

Such men will always be ready, if it squares with their selfish views, to take part against their country in any dispute which it may have with a foreign nation, whatever may be the justice of the case; and, to talk to them of *national honour* is like singing to a man that has been born deaf.

One of the chief merits, in my eyes, of Sir Francis Burdett, is, that he has, upon no occasion sided against his country. To do this nothing has ever provoked him. In all his complaints against corruptors and plunderers, amidst all the expressions of his resentment, I never perceived him leaning towards the enemies of England. He was not one of those who expressed their joy at the conclusion of the peace of Amiens. He has never been found amongst those, who have taken occasion to recommend fawning language towards any foreign power. He has censured the wars of Pitt, and who does not now see, that the censure was well-founded; but, while he has been accused of all manner of political crimes, no man can cite the passage wherein he took part against his country. It is not pretended, that cases may not arise, wherein it may become a man's duty to defend the cause of another nation against his own; but, in the case before us, the question is, whether we are to give up or maintain a right, which was, formerly, constantly maintained by all the kings and rulers of England. From the time of there being an English navy, England has, until the peace of Amiens, claimed, and, in some way or other, maintained, a right of sea-dominion. Till then we always claimed, as a right, that the ships of other nations should bow their flags to our ships. In our treaties with the Dutch, from the reign of Charles II. a recognition of this right was always inserted. At the peace of Amiens this recognition was omitted; and, since that peace, for the first time, British sailors have seen the ships of other nations passing by them, as *equals* upon the sea. The effacing of the *Lillies* from the arms of England was ano-

ther act of the same sort. Those *Lillies* were a memorial, that Englishmen once conquered France; and, what baseness was it in us, or rather in Pitt, to give up this memorial? But, from ministers bent solely upon their own gains, what else is to be expected? Amidst the divers cares of corruption the country is quite forgotten. You have always seen, that, in proportion as the nation has been oppressed at home, its rights abroad have been disregarded by its rulers; and, on the other hand, that the overthrow of corruption and speculation has always been accompanied with a renovation of the spirit and the power of the nation.

To return, for a little, to the dispute with America; I think the ministers will not yield our right to search foreign ships, of whatever description, for British seamen. I think they will not dare to do this; and, I hope, notwithstanding the terrible circumstance of their being the disciples of Pitt, that they are not disposed to do it. But, I am almost certain, that their predecessors would have done it. You saw with what eagerness Mr. Whitbread caught hold of the affair between the *Leopard* and the *Chesapeake*. How, even upon a bare report of that affair, he called upon the ministers to disclaim the order to search, and to express, at once, their disapprobation of the officers, by whom the search had been ordered and executed. Here you had a sample of that disposition, which has always been apparent in Mr. Whitbread and his associates. They gave themselves no time to inquire; no time to consider; forth they came like avowed advocates of our insidious enemies, and their subservient print followed their example. This print is *now* become quiet upon the subject. It is waiting to see if no favourable opportunity will offer itself for resuming the pleadings. There is something so unnatural in this conduct, that one cannot help detesting it. It is truly curious, that, during all the disputes that we have had with the Americans, since the end of the war with them, this *Morning Chronicle* has been steadily upon their side; but, observe, when the Americans were engaged in a quarrel with *France*, then the *Morning Chronicle* was *against* them! Our concessions to the Americans, our submission to them, have been shameful. The items of our baseness in this way would, line under line, fill this sheet. If our very existence had depended upon their absolute will, we could not have been more submissive than we have been. And, the cause of this has been, not an anxious desire in our several sets of ministers to spare either our money or our blood, but to favour



the pursuits of bodies of merchants, manufacturers, and speculators in American funds. If this dispute with America should become a subject of public discussion, I beseech you to mark well who those are, who plead for the surrender of our rights; and, take my word for it you will find nearly if not quite all of them to be concerned in American trade, American funds, or American *lands*, of which latter there are men in England who have immense tracts. Gentlemen, I could point out to you persons, who, having gorged themselves with public money in England, that is to say, with the fruit of the people's labour, have deposited it in the American funds; and, doubtless, from the base motive of having a last resource, in case their gorgings here should, at last, bring down vengeance upon their heads. Such men have, generally, a brother, or a son, or an agent of some sort, in America to superintend their property there; and, if a time of pressing danger were to arrive here, they would instantly sail off with every thing they could carry with them. These men well know, that the first act of war, on the part of America, would be to sequester their property; and, they have seen, that, between sequestration and confiscation the space is not very wide. Men thus situated are not few in number, nor are they weak in point of political influence; and the Americans, knowing this, rely upon them for support here, and for the compelling of the government to sacrifice *our rights to their interests*. Proceeding upon this reliance, the American government will, at first, talk stoutly; and, as it will cost them nothing, they may, perhaps, go so far as to pass an act of sequestration; but, if we remain firm, they will yield, and yield they must, for a war for only six months against us they cannot maintain. They already, even at the *name* of war, tremble for their ships and their harbours and their towns. Small though Britain is in size, it is, when in good hands, great in power. Being masters of the sea, there is no land that can injure or insult us with impunity. And, if the Edinburgh Reviewers, headed by Mr. Whitbread, should ask me what we get by this, my answer is, that I know nothing in this world which is worth so much to me as my share in the renown of my country.

In a future letter I shall lay before you some striking instances of the injuries which we have received from the American States. In the mean while I remain,

Your faithful friend,

Botley, Sept. 3, } and obedient servant,  
1807. } W. M. COBETT.

## DOMINION OF THE SEAS.

Sir ;—With regard to the line of policy to be now pursued by this country, you are in the right. We have nothing more to do with the continent. We have tried a sufficient number of experiments for its defence already, and the result ought to teach us to despair of its salvation. Our only object should now be to preserve the dominion of the seas; and I agree with you, that our pretensions to this sovereignty ought to be distinctly avowed. It is as much our right as any thing can become the property of a nation; and, besides, our claim is sanctioned by the first of all laws—its necessity to our own preservation. When we give up the dominion of the seas, the right of search, and other subordinate claims necessary to its preservation, we may give up the dominion of Britain, and admit Buonaparte for our ruler. The dominion of the seas is our last stay and hope, and ought to be persevered in without regard of the result; because there can nothing worse happen to us than to lose it. Better to us, then, to fall in the attempt to support this right, than by conceding it. In the former case we have a chance of preservation, in the latter none. If there is any thing, therefore, excellent in the English constitution, if there is any security for property and the natural rights of mankind in this country, which other nations do not enjoy; if the power of Napoleon is to be dreaded; if spoliation and despotism are evils; and if the slavery of the mind is hateful to Britons—let us risk every thing to maintain the dominion of the seas, or only yield it when France yields the dominion of the land.—BRITANNICUS.—  
St——n, 30th August, 1807.

## DOMINION OF THE SEAS.

Sir ;—Though you have hitherto paid little attention to my letters, I am resolved not to be repulsed by a cold reception, for I have such an esteem for your talents and so high a sense of the value of your opinions contained in your last number as to the right of Britain to the Dominion of the Seas, that I will not refrain from endeavouring to impress upon my countrymen some reflections supplementary to yours, to convince them if possible, of the dangers of peace till the superiority of the English flag is acknowledged by the proud conqueror of Europe, and consequently by the rest of the world. I will not attempt to explode more forcibly than you have done, the chimerical nonsense of the equal rights of nations; for you have proved that nations have no rights, but the right of the strongest—and that having already obtained that right by the spirit and



discipline of our navy, and enjoyed it from time immemorial, we surrender the only bulwark of our safety, if we suffer it to be disputed or infringed. You are right, Mr. Cobbett, your opinions properly examined, explained, and extended, go far to refute those chimerical notions of equality which have produced so much mischief in the world, which have armed the weak against the strong, and given more power to those who had too much before. It is only by the calm effects of reason that the condition of mankind can ever be improved; reason is the strength of the unarmed, and cannon is the strength of kings; it is reasonable and desirable that the lowest of mankind should enjoy the comforts of life, but they can shew no right to them independent of what they can gain by their own exertion. Let me now return from this digression to the rights of nations: and, surely, a more unfavourable opportunity could never have been chosen for prating about these rights, than the present, when one mighty despot, has subjugated the whole of the continent and is aiming a deadly blow at the independence of Britain; this is the time, forsooth, when we are to give up the superiority of the seas, for the sake of a mere metaphysical principle, a visionary nonentity, which never had nor ever will have any actual existence while men continue to be formed with passions and appetites for power, such as they have ever been, and while one man or one nation is ever eagerly waiting to lay hold of that which is abandoned by another. Power in all men, and bodies of men is sanctioned by time, and remains their right till it can be taken from them by a superior force. Such is the right we now claim to the empire of the seas; let other nations, if they please, attempt to take it from us; and if they are successful we must submit, but never let us part with a tittle of it, if we regard our safety, or our commerce; we have got it; we must keep it if we wish to continue a nation.—To all this it may be answered, that all arbitrary power is unjust; and so it is, according to those theoretical notions of justice which the reason of man is capable of forming; but as the reason of man and his conduct are ever at variance, it will often be found, that even those who are most strongly impressed with the sense of equal rights and equal justice, will be forced to act contrary to their opinion of right, in order to protect themselves from the injustice of others. Could all men be brought to act on principles of justice, it would be a very fine thing, and then we should have neither wars nor fightings; but as that is not very proba-

ble, we must all do the most in our power to protect ourselves, and the least to injure others. Nations neither are nor ever can be the subjects of law like individuals, while the rulers of nations are actuated by ambition, and all those dangerous passions, which disturb and torment the world; equal laws are the result of a general compact, but there can be no general compact among nations, which will not be perpetually liable to be violated. Let us, therefore, persevere in the present contest, till we see it possible to give it up with safety: let us avoid as much as possible to bully other nations, but let us never submit to be bullied ourselves, lest in time we be subdued by a power that is stronger.—I remain, &c.—W. BURDON.

PLAN FOR SUPERSEDING THE NECESSITY OF  
THE POOR'S RATE.

Sir;—As the Poor's Rate has become an alarming as well as an heavy burthen, and is naturally felt the heavier from the necessary increase of government taxes, the following expedient, it is presumed, will not only lessen the burthen immediately, but eventually annihilate the necessity of raising any Rate for relieving the Poor; at the same time that it will increase the income of one of the existing government taxes to a very large amount, so as to equal the whole of the money now raised by the Poor's Rate; and this is to be done without taking an additional shilling, generally speaking, from the pockets of his Majesty's subjects;—without changing the present system or the operation of any poor law now in force;—without putting the execution of them into other hands, but leaving the present statutes and the effects of them as they now stand.—All this is to be effected by simply diverting what is already a voluntary, into a compulsory tax; by rendering the effect of it certain, whereas it now depends on the credit of speculating individuals; by rendering that which is at this time a mere gambling benefit to private men, a grand, permanent and solid advantage to the whole kingdom.

PLAN.—That every parish should insure itself from loss and damage by fire; and that the money arising therefrom be, partly in the first instance, and eventually the whole of it, applied to the relief of the poor. This is the great leading feature.—It cannot be doubted that the Plan would be palatable from the large number of individuals who voluntarily insure on the credit of the various offices; and that in proportion to the money they now pay for such insurance, so much less would they pay towards the poor rate. That it would be effectual there can be no



doubt, from its being the most profitable speculation for monied men: and that in immediate effect it would almost answer the whole of the intended purpose, may be gathered from a calculation on two parishes, one in London and the other in the Country.

The rental of the parish in London is £4,500 per ann. and to place the houses at the lowest value, estimate them at 20 years purchase: this will bring them to £90,000 value, at 2s. 6d. in the pound, the sum now paid, the yearly income will amount to . . . . . £112 10 0

The Furniture may be calculated about the same . . . . . 112 10 0

And the Stock . . . . . 112 10 0

£337 10 0

N. B. This sum does not include hazardous and doubly hazardous, so that it might be rated higher.\*

This will appear a tolerable easy calculation, because, where traders do not live the furniture becomes so much the more valuable, as fully to compensate the difference. And this sum exceeding the expenditure of the present poor rate in that parish by about one eighth; would very soon annihilate there the necessity of a poor's rate.—In calculating the country parish it seemed at first glance, necessary to estimate the rents and value in a different way, by putting houses with and without land in different classes, charging the land with only so many years rental for the corn, hay, farming utensils, live and dead stock, &c. †; but on making the estimate by the same rule of 20 years purchase on the rental, and finding the farmer would pay a much smaller proportion than he now pays,—it appearing too that many more paupers are thrown upon the poor rate from farmers' houses, who hire their servants by the year than from private families;—and on consulting persons well skilled in agricultural and parochial concerns; there can be no necessity of changing the mode of calculation.—The rental of the country parish is £26,000 per centum, and will afford £1850. The poor's rate of this parish amounts on an average to somewhat more.—But although it be impossible to see at one view how this proposition would bear upon every parish, still there is one certain conclusion; that where the ratio of insurance should, after forming a stock to answer the exigencies of loss by fire, exceed the sum necessary for a poor rate, then the ratio might be lowered, and where it should not reach it, *valeat quantum valere potest*, ei-

\* The tax to government would produce £271. 10s. at least.

† Insurance offices rate these at an higher value than houses, &c.

ther the ratio might be encreased or the old mode of a rate might be resorted to in order to meet the deficiency; this could neither be considered as oppressive or unequal, and by this proposition each parish in diverting the means now used into another channel, would raise a great part if not the whole of its own supplies without the burthen of the poor's rate.

REGULATIONS.—That only a given portion of the payment on Insurance be at first applied in aid of the Poor Rate, and the rest vested in the Bank in the name of Parish Trustees, until such a sufficient stock be funded as would on a fair calculation answer all contingent losses by individuals, and in the expenditure of the whole stock, by conflagration, the parish to begin *de novo*.—The rate should be collected by the overseers as it now is, and the money applied in the same manner, as far as it would reach.—A proper surveyor should be appointed for every parish by a vestry, in Easter week, removeable as other parish officers are; he should value houses, stock, furniture, and whatever else the legislature should determine insurable; he should be paid a certain poundage; his return should be compulsory unless where the party insured should think his return too small for stock, &c. in that case the party might enlarge it at his option; reserving appeals, for persons thinking themselves aggrieved, to the quarter sessions, as under the present poor laws.—In case of accident by fire, the sufferer should be entitled to receive according to his rate in the same manner as by insurance offices; and where any person has ensured beyond the estimate of the surveyor, the oath of the party to his loss, should be considered final as to the claim for remuneration, except where fraud can be proved or such other cases of exception now made by the offices.—By law, engines are now kept in every parish, and fire ladders; some proper person should be annually chosen as the engineer, with a small salary, who should be fineable in a summary investigation by the magistrates, on proof that the engine, hose, &c. are not in compleat repair, and ready on any alarm; and certain other persons appointed as occasional assistants or firemen, to receive pay only in cases of assisting the engineer to try the engine, or being called out to attend fires, &c.—Other regulations would suggest themselves under a discussion of the plan if it were to be adopted.

OBJECTIONS.—It may be urged against this Plan, that it is an uncertain one, inasmuch as by one extensive conflagration more than the immediate stock in hand might be



swallowed up at once, and the whole parish thereby impoverished. To this it may be answered, that such a circumstance is unlikely; that the funded stock might be made sufficiently large to answer uncommon calamities, and that where the extent should be very excessive the suffering parish after contributing their fund, should be entitled to call upon the adjacent parishes of the hundred, or ward, or town, as it may be, to contribute in proportion, and make up the whole loss; this would be acting in the spirit of the present poor laws, where an overburthened parish may call upon an adjacent one not so burthened, for assistance.—Beside in the two parishes calculated from, the loss by fire in the last half century, to go no further, has not exceeded £300.—And it should be recollected, that monied men consider the speculation of fire insurance to be so valuable, that no shares are ever to be publicly bought in any office; and new offices are daily encreasing. An objection may be made to a surveyor viewing houses, furniture, stock, &c. as a sort of inquisition; but it is submitted to, already under the voluntary tax, every office employing surveyors for that purpose, and each man will have the option of paying what insurance above the surveyor's valuation he pleases. Those who now have an almost exclusive claim to receive this money either under charter or otherwise, would doubtless raise an objection to this plan; but, where such incalculable benefit would accrue to the whole public, surely such objection would be trifling; the gains already acquired must be sufficient compensation for all money advanced; and, indeed, no money is ever advanced, it is all upon credit;\* and such offices might still insure lives, shipping, freight, &c.—As to other Objections, there can surely be none, at least none obvious enough to appear, or strong enough to be resistless.

**ADVANTAGES.**—The public, generally speaking, now pay *two rates*, one for the poor, the other for insurance; these would eventually merge into one, and in the *present*, one would go so far in aid of the other, that every man of common sense must see that all he now pays for insurance, he would save in appropriating it to the poor. Government, would, by the adoption of this plan increase the 2s. per centum tax on insurance, over the whole 20 years value of all property in the kingdom; a tax now a voluntary one, and most cheerfully paid;

\* The case of the new office now applying to parliament excepted, where they deposit one million in the Bank.

and one wherein every man, almost, would rather over than under rate his property.—In forming a parochial stock *by funding*, it would throw large sums of money into the market,\* and, of course, not only keep up the present price of stock, but not being a fluctuating and transferable property would, by leaving less to be sold, keep it up for ever†.—The local advantages of this plan are of great estimation. Every man in cases of fire would *himself* be interested in assisting to save the property of his neighbour, remembering the more he saved, the less he should be called upon to pay, to make up the loss of another.—To have an engine always ready and firemen at hand, is too obvious an advantage to be insisted upon‡. And as the mischief arising from fires would be lessened, so would the frequency of them; because an incendiary would more easily be discovered among his interested neighbours, character better known, the value of property more visible and better ascertained; and so easily estimated that the speculation of the ideal insurer would not be worth the hazard of detection and punishment.—There is still another and a most equitable advantage. The owners of houses who now pay nothing to the exigencies of the parish out of which they derive their income, and on whose credit to a tenant of £10 per annum, whether solvent or not, the law establishes a claim for relief; on the parish where such house shall stand such owners of houses would contribute to ease the burthens of that very parish their estates are now contributing to load; and this without injury or loss to the owner, as it must be presumed the owners usually in-

\* If it be a good reason for chartering an office that one million of its property is lodged in the Bank; how strong is the same argument for this mode.

† Suppose the sum funded for each parish gradually as a stock, should reach no higher than a 5th part of the estimated value of the property in that parish, then there would be an untransferable property in the Bank at a given time of a 5th of the value of the property in the kingdom 20 times told.

‡ In one of the parishes, calculated from, about 10 miles from town, on an alarm of fire, the parish engine was useless, no fire ladder at hand; no fireman; no engineer; no expences whatever incurred by any one of the offices; and a large population kept in alarm till assistance could be procured from London; the insurance, now voluntarily paid, being upwards of £1200 per annum.



sure, and their payment of insurance would merely be transferred.—Besides, the tenant would, in such case, be benefited in proportion to his landlord's amount of insurance, as according to the present calculation owners would contribute one third of the rate.—Leases and agreements between landlord and tenant may stand as they now do; nor need a landlord complain of paying the tax, supposing he does not now insure, as his property would be more valuable in the same ratio as his tenant would pay less poor rate.—Other advantages innumerable suggest themselves, let these suffice, the plan is simple, easily executed, certain in its operation, equal in its demands, disturbing no system of general or local laws, economical to individuals, and most beneficial to government.

## CORRUPTION—A TRIFLE.

MR. COBBETT,——Accidentally taking up the Edinburgh Review, I found my attention strongly attracted by a critique on your political journal. The reviewer is a man of no mean ability, a zealous adherent of the late administration, and one of those about to taste of their bounty at the moment they fell a victim to the intrigues of their "no popery" antagonists. I recollect one of your opinions to be that "the Wrangling Factions," "inns," and "outs," equally hate you; and my curiosity was excited to see how this champion of the Whigs (that is the name the reviewer's patrons prefer to be designated by) would deal with you and your essays. I collected from the introduction of this gentleman's comments, that upon your first arrival in this country from America and commencing your political career among us, your opinion of Pitt and his system was different from that you now profess: from whence a laboured charge of inconsistency is set up against you. Upon this most unimportant topic I presume you are capable of defending yourself, if you think it deserves a serious discussion; for my part, I considered it as "mere doubling to mislead the hounds"; and my sole anxiety being to learn if the abuses you denounce do really, and to what extent, exist; or, whether they are to be referred to no more creditable source than a factious spirit wilfully misrepresenting, or at least, viewing objects through a false medium, I hurried on to that part of the reviewer's task in which he sets about denying, or by explanation to do away the effects of your assertions. You complain of *Sinecure Places and Pensions*: he does not dispute their existence, but alleges, "they are mere trifles," that "a strict reform in this respect could not pro-

duce more than one million annually;" and remarks, "it is mere faction to say that either this or the sums lost by speculation can make any sensible difference in the national burthens." This, to be sure, is clearing the ground in good style. The assertions, if not quite satisfactory, are at least intelligible, and may be fairly taken as a distinct exposition of Whig ideas of reformation. Still, as this enlightened politician assured me, that "even as a source of influence it was too inconsiderable to deserve any distinguished notice," I began to flatter myself the loss of the money might be the whole mischief; though upon this point I was rather sceptical, having from long habit and some consideration of the subject, felt a strong inclination to consider a sinecure placeman as bearing a close similitude to the blow-fly that pollutes far more than he consumes. But while my opinion was thus vibrating between hope and fear, the comfort I had received from the sanction of the reviewer's sentiments was at once swept away when, by referring to page 305 of the same book, I found that places and pensions not only *might*, but in the opinion of this mirror of consistency, *actually* had produced all the bad effects my apprehension attributed to them. I quote his very words, "how melancholy to reflect that there would be still some chance of saving England from the general wreck of empires, but that it may not be saved because one politician may lose £2000 a year by it, and another £3000, a third a place in reversion, and a fourth a pension for his aunt! Alas, these are the powerful causes which have always settled the destiny of great kingdoms, and may level Old England with all its boasted freedom and boasted wisdom to the dust," and I agree with the reviewer if these and some "mere trifles" he alludes to are not remedied, "that (to use his own words) it does appear quite impossible that so mean and so foolish a people can escape that destruction which is ready to burst upon them." The Edinburgh Editor after making a very nice distinction between the comparative merit of him who accepts and him who offers a bribe, and rather unjustly, as I think, holding the tempter less culpable than the tempted, consents to consign both the one and the other to what he is pleased to term "your just indignation," but by no means can be brought to admit that a rotten borough (which he defines a borough which government has not bought, but which I define to be "a borough it may buy when ever it thinks fit to expend the nation's

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" money for that purpose,") is any very great nuisance, proceeds to give (as I trust) a most unjust and certainly a very novel explanation of the principles of the British Constitution, upon the subject of which I may perhaps at a future day, trouble you with some comments. In the mean time, altho' I must confess rotten boroughs are not in the smallest degree objectionable, and sinecure places and pensions on his plan indispensably necessary, yet as the theory of his system can only be realized on the ruin of the British Constitution as established at the Revolution, I can by no means become a convert to his political speculations, and take my leave of him with a recommendation that when he shall next be inclined at the expence of sincerity to wield his pen in defence of a system the effects of which he so feelingly deploras, he should be a little more cautious than to place the means of his detection almost line and line with his own statements.

AN OLD ENGLISHMAN.

## PUBLIC PAPER.

DENMARK.—*Proclamation issued on the 16th of August, at Zealand, by Admiral Gambier and Lord Cathcart, commanders in chief of his Majesty's forces by sea and by land, employed in the expedition.*

Whereas the present Treaties of Peace, and the changes of Government and of Territory, acceded to by so many Powers, have so far increased the influence of France on the continent of Europe, as to render it impossible for Denmark, though it desires to be neutral, to preserve its neutrality, and absolutely necessary for those who continue to resist the French aggression, to take measures to prevent the arms of Neutral Powers from being turned against them.—In this view, the King cannot regard the present position of Denmark with indifference, and his Majesty has sent negociators, with ample powers, to his Danish Majesty, to request, in the most amicable manner, such explanations as the times require, and a concurrence in such measures, as can alone give security against the farther mischiefs which the French meditate through the acquisition of the Danish Navy.—The King, our royal and most gracious master, has therefore judged it expedient, to desire the temporary deposit of the Danish ships of the line, in one of his Majesty's ports.—The deposit seems to be so just, and so indispensibly necessary, under the relative circumstances of the Neutral and Belligerent Powers, that his Majesty has further deemed it a duty to himself, and to his people, to support this demand by a power-

ful fleet, and by an army amply supplied with every preparation necessary for the most active and determined enterprise.—We come, therefore, to your shores, inhabitants of Zealand! not as enemies, but in self-defence, to prevent those, who have so long disturbed the peace of Europe, from compelling the force of your Navy to be turned against us.—We ask deposit, we have not looked to capture; so far from it, the most solemn pledge has been offered to your Government, and is hereby renewed in the name, and at the express command of the King, our master, that if our demand is amicably acceded to, every ship belonging to Denmark, shall, at the conclusion of a General Peace, be restored to her, in the same condition and state of equipment, as when received under the protection of the British flag.—It is in the power of your government, by a word, to sheath our swords, most reluctantly drawn against you; but if, on the other hand, the machinations of France render you deaf to the voice of reason and the call of friendship, the innocent blood that will be spilt, and the horrors of a besieged and a bombarded capital, must fall on your own heads, and on those of your cruel advisers.—His Majesty's seamen and soldiers when on shore, will treat Zealand, as long as your conduct to them permits it, on the footing of a province of the most friendly power in alliance with Great Britain, whose territory has the misfortune to be the theatre of war.—The persons of all those who remain at home, and who do not take an hostile part, will be held sacred.—Property will be respected and preserved, and the most severe discipline will be enforced.—Every article of supply furnished, or brought to market, will be paid for at a fair and settled price; but as immediate and constant supplies, especially of provision, forage, fuel, and transports, are necessary to all armies, it is well known that requisitions are unavoidable, and must be enforced.—Much convenience will arise to the inhabitants, and much confusion and loss to them will be prevented, if persons in authority are found in the several districts to whom requisitions may be addressed, and through whom claims for payment may be settled and liquidated.—If such persons are appointed, and discharge their duty, without meddling in matters which do not concern them, they shall be respected, and all requisitions shall be addressed to them, through the proper channels, and departments of the navy and army; but as forbearance on the part of the inhabitants is essential to the principle of these



arrangements, it is necessary that all manner of civil persons should remain at their respective habitations, and any peasants, or other persons, found in arms, singly or in small troops, or who may be guilty of any act of violence, must expect to be treated with rigour.—The Government of his Danish Majesty having hitherto refused to treat this matter in an amicable way, part of the army has been disembarked, and the whole force has assumed a warlike attitude; but it is as yet not too late for the voice of reason and moderation to be heard.—Given in the Sound, under our hands and seals, this 16th day of August, 1807.—(Signed as above.)

**DENMARK.**—*Proclamation of the Danish Government against England; dated Gluckstadt, August 16, 1807.*

We, Christian the seventh, by the grace of God, king of Denmark, Norway, of the Wends and Goths, duke of Schleswig, Holstein, Slonnau, and Dietmarschen, also of Oldenburgh, &c. &c. do herewith make known;—That whereas by the English Envoy, Jackson, it was declared to us, on the 13th of this month, that hostilities against Denmark would be commenced; and whereas at the same time he demanded passports for himself and his suite, consequently, the war between England and Denmark may be considered as actually broken out; therefore, we herewith call on all our faithful subjects to take up arms, whenever it shall be desired, to frustrate the insidious designs of the enemy, and repel hostile attack.—We further herewith ordain, that all English ships, as well as all English property, and all English goods, shall be seized by the magistrates, and otherwise, particularly by the officers of the customs wheresoever they may be found. It is further our will, that all English subjects, until, pursuant to our further orders, they can be sent out of the country, shall, without exception, be arrested as enemies of our kingdom and our country; which measure is strictly to be carried into execution by all magistrates, as well as by all subordinate officers, duly to be instructed by them for that purpose. And it is a matter of course, that all English ships and boats which approach our coasts shall be considered and treated as enemies.—It is also our will, that all suspicious foreigners shall be watched with the greatest attention; and that all magistrates, as well as all subordinate officers, shall use their utmost efforts, as soon as possible, to discover all spies. Lastly, we find it necessary to ordain, that, immediately after pub-

lication hereof, all correspondence with English subjects shall entirely cease, and that no payment shall be made to them on any ground whatever, until our further orders, on pain of severe punishment in case of continuation. For the rest we rely on the justice of our cause, and the courage and tried fidelity of our beloved subjects.—Given under our Royal Seal, in our fortress of Gluckstadt, the 16th August, 1807.—(L S.) C. L. BARON VON BROCKDORFF, J. C. MORITZ.

#### FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPERS.

**FRANCE.**—*Speech of the Emperor Napoleon at the opening of the Meeting of the Legislative Body, at Paris, August 16 1807.*

Gentlemen, the Deputies of the Legislative Body; Gentlemen, the Members of the Tribunal, and of my Council of State.—Since your last meeting, new wars, new triumphs, and new treaties of peace, have changed the aspect of the political relations of Europe.—The House of Brandenburg, which was the first to combine against our independence, is indebted, for still being permitted to reign, to the sincere friendship with which the powerful Emperor of the North has inspired me.—A French Prince shall reign on the Elbe. He will know how to make the interests of his new subjects form the first and most sacred of his duties.—The House of Saxony has recovered the independence, which it lost fifty years ago. The people of the dukedom of Warsaw, and of the town of Dantzic, are again in possession of their country, and have obtained their rights. All the nations concur in rejoicing, that the pernicious influence, which England exercised over the continent, is for ever destroyed.—France is united by the laws of the confederacy of the Rhine, with the people of Germany, and by our federative system with the people of Spain, Holland, Switzerland, and Italy. Our new relations with Russia are founded upon the reciprocal respect of two great nations.—In every thing I have done, I have only had the happiness of my people in view—that has always been in my eyes far dearer to me than my own renown.—I wish for peace by sea. No irritation shall ever have any influence on my decisions with respect to that object. I cannot be irritated against a nation which is the sport and the victim of the parties that devour it, and which is misled, as well with respect to its own affairs as to those of its neighbours.—But, whatever may be the termination which providence has decreed the maritime war shall have, my



people will always find me the same, and I shall always find them worthy of me.—Frenchmen, your conduct in these times towards your Emperor, who was now more than 500 miles distant from you, has increased my respect, and the idea I had formed of your character—I have felt myself proud to be the first amongst you. The proofs of attachment which you have given me, while, during ten months of absence and danger, I was ever present to your thoughts, have constantly awakened in me the liveliest sensations. All my solitudes—all that related even to the safety of my person, was only interesting to me, on account of the part you took in them, and the important influence which they might produce on your future destiny.—*You are a good and a great people.*—I have contrived various means for simplifying and perfecting our institutions. The nation has experienced the happiest effects from the establishment of the Legion of Honour. I have distributed various imperial titles, in order to give a new lustre to the most distinguished of my subjects, to honour extraordinary services by extraordinary rewards, and at once to prevent the return of all feudal titles, which are incompatible with our constitution.—The accounts of my ministers of finance, and of the public treasury, will make known to you the prosperous state of our finances. My people will see the contributions upon real property considerably diminished.—My minister of the interior will give you an account of the public works which are begun or finished; but those which may still be expected, are much more considerable, since it is my determination that in all parts of my empire, even in the smallest hamlet, the comforts of the citizens, and the value of the lands shall be increased, by the development of that universal system of improvement which I have formed.—Gentlemen, Deputies to the Legislative Body, your assistance in the accomplishment of that great object will be necessary to me, and I have a right to reckon upon that assistance with confidence.

**NEW CONSTITUTION OF THE DUCHY OF WARSAW.**—*The New Constitution of the Duchy of Warsaw has been published in the Moniteur. It consists of 89 Articles, divided into 12 Sections, of which the following are the heads:—*

Section I The Roman Catholic religion is the religion of the state, but all other religions are free. The Duchy is divided into six bishoprics, over which one archbishop and five bishops preside. Slavery is

abolished, and all citizens are equal with respect to the law.—II. Of the Government. The Archducal Crown is hereditary in the Kings of Saxony, who are to appoint a Viceroy or President of the Ministerial Council. The property of the Ducal Crown consists, 1. In an annual revenue of seven millions of Polish guelders, one half arising from the royal lands or demesnes, the other half from the treasury; 2d, In the Royal Palace of Warsaw, and the Saxon Palace.—III. Of the Ministers of the Council of State.—The ministry consists of six members, viz. The Ministers of Justice, of Foreign Affairs, of Religion, of War, of Finances, and of Police. There is also a Secretary of State. The Council of State is formed out of the ministry for the purpose of preparing plans of laws, &c. all of which the King has the power of rejecting.—IV. Of the General Diet.—This body is divided into two chambers, viz. the senate and the representatives. The Diet is to assemble every second year, for 14 days, when a royal act of convocation calls the members together.—V. Of the Senate.—This chamber has 18 members, consisting of six Bishops, six Palatines, and six Castellans, all appointed by the King, who has also the power of encreasing the number of senators to thirty, if he shall think fit.—VI. Of the Chamber of Representatives.—These consist of 60 deputies, chosen by the district diets of the nobles, and 40 elected by the towns. The members retain their seats for nine years, but at the end of every three years, one-third of the body is renewed.—VII. This section contains regulations for the meetings of the district, diets, &c.—VIII. Of the Division of the Territory.—The Duchy is divided into six departments, to each of which there is a prefect, under prefect, mayors, and a departmental council of from 16 to 24 members.—IX. Of the Laws.—“The Napoleon Code shall be the civil law of the Duchy of Warsaw.” Each department has a civil and a criminal court. The council of state is the last court of appeal. The judges are appointed by the King.—X. Of the Armed Force.—The standing army consists of 30,000 men. The King can call a part of this force into Saxony, but must replace them by an equal number of Saxons.—XI. General Regulations.—All who have not places for life may be dismissed at the pleasure of the King, the deputies only excepted. None but citizens of the Dukedom can be appointed to public situations. All the acts of the government must be drawn up in the Polish language. All the civic and military orders formerly subsisting in Poland, are to remain un-



changed, but the King is their head.—XII. The present imposts remain until the 1st of January, 1809. No change can be made in the organization of the troops, until regulations be made on that subject by the Diet.—We Napoleon, by the grace of God and the Constitution, Emperor of the French, King of Italy, and Protector of the Rhenish Confederacy, have approved, and hereby do approve of the above constitutional act, which has been submitted to us for carrying into effect the 5th Article of the Treaty of Tilsit, and which we consider as calculated to fulfil our engagements to the people of Warsaw and Great Poland, by reconciling their freedom and privileges with the tranquillity of the neighbouring states.—Given in the Royal Palace of Dresden, this 22d day of July, 1807. (Signed) NAPOLEON.

WARSAW.—*Proclamation issued by the General Director; dated Warsaw, July 18, 1807.*

Citizens—You have done every thing which the love of your country, your honour, and the example of your ancestors required of you. You have overcome all difficulties; you have not hesitated to sacrifice your lives, your fortunes, and the most sacred ties of nature, for the happiness of your Country, and to again obtain the name of Poles. A single word from his Majesty the Emperor of the French has armed you all. His vast genius insures you victory. By your firmness all your enterprises will be crowned with success. Despise all the false reports which the inveterate enemies of your Country circulate. The greatness of soul of Napoleon is your Ægis. Our fate cannot be determined at this moment; an impenetrable veil must conceal it for some time from our eyes. Let us adore the sublime wisdom of him who commands half of the world. Banish the despair of your hearts. Be penetrated with obedience, and resign yourselves to the confidence you ought to have in his goodness: your happiness depends on it. The least murmur, the least opposition to his will, may destroy all that you have hitherto done. Our new born power cannot exist without this—we can only obtain existence from the amiable Napoleon, a man equally great in politics and war, determines and executes every thing in the profundity of his wisdom, without our being able to penetrate his motives; let us place in him unbounded confidence; this is the only means which can secure to us his benevolence; and let us

employ quietly and patiently the time which peace affords us to render ourselves perfect in every thing relative to the service of our Country.—LUBIENSKI, President.

RUSSIA.—*Answer to the Note of Count Marveld, (the Austrian Ambassador.)*

“The Emperor Alexander has fully appreciated the motives which have induced his Majesty the Emperor and King to offer his mediation and his good offices to the principal Belligerent powers, for which, on his part, he is happy in the opportunity of expressing his gratitude to his Imperial and Royal Majesty.—The frequent and unequivocal proofs which the Emperor of all the Russias has afforded, of his earnest desire to see the termination of the calamities which have so long desolated Europe, might have convinced his Imperial and Royal Majesty of the earnestness with which the court of St. Petersburg would receive every proposal tending to promote so important an object. His Imperial Majesty of all the Russias will always be animated by the same disposition; and he will be ready to accept the proffered mediation, whenever it shall be in the power of his Majesty the Emperor and King to communicate to him the grounds upon which the French government may be inclined to enter into negociation; and that it shall appear these grounds are of such a nature, as may afford a prospect of the attainment of that end, which is the object of all the endeavours of his Imperial Majesty of all the Russias, as is already sufficiently known to the Court of Vienna. (Signed,) Andre de Budberg. Bartenstein, April 16, 1807.”

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